

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 204074

VVVVVVNOL STATE 204074 SENT ACTION BONN INFO SEOUL AUG. 27 REPEATED
TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 204074

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KN, KS, GW

SUBJECT: FRG INTEREST IN ESTABLISHING TRADE OFFICES
WITH NORTH KOREA

1. GERMAN EMBASSY MINISTER-COUNSELOR RUYTER CALLED ON
DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AUG 25 AND 26 ON INSTRUCTIONS TO SEEK
USG COMMENTS ON POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRADE OFFICES
BETWEEN FRG AND NORTH KOREA. HE EXPLAINED FOREIGN MIN-
ISTRY PRESENTLY CONSIDERING PROPOSAL TO FORMALIZE TRADE
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RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ON A QUOTE STRICTLY

NON-GOVERNMENTAL BASIS UNQUOTE. RUYTER NOTED THAT AN INCREASING NUMBER OF COUNTRIES, INCLUDING SEVERAL WEST EUROPEAN STATES, HAVE RELATIONS WITH BOTH KOREAS AND THAT FRANCE AND ITALY HAVE FORMAL TRADE RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA. BONN'S TRADE WITH PYONGYANG HAS GROWN CONSIDERABLY IN RECENT YEARS AND GERMAN COMMERCIAL CONCERNS ARE INTERESTED IN FURTHER INCREASING EXPORTS TO NORTH KOREA. IN RESPONSE TO OUR QUESTION, RUYTER SAID IT WAS UNCLEAR FROM HIS INSTRUCTIONS WHETHER NORTH KOREA HAD APPROACHED FRG ON ESTABLISHING TRADE OFFICES.

2. RUYTER EMPHASIZED THAT FORMALIZING TRADE RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA WOULD NOT AFFECT FAVORABLE FRG ATTITUDES TOWARD ROK OR FRG SUPPORT FOR KOREAN ISSUES AT UN AND

ELSEWHERE. NOR WOULD FRG POSITION ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA BE CHANGED; FRG WOULD CONTINUE TO HOLD VIEW THAT MOVEMENT BY SUPPORTERS OF NORTH KOREA TO RECOGNIZE ROK MUST PRECEDE BONN RECOGNITION OF PYONGYANG.

3. EA DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY EDMOND INFORMED RUYTER THAT DECISION ON TRADE OFFICES WAS ONE FOR FRG TO MAKE IN LIGHT OF ITS OWN INTERESTS. HOWEVER, USG WOULD BE DISAPPOINTED IF FRG PROCEEDED. FRG SHOULD APPROACH ROK, AS PRINCIPAL COUNTRY AFFECTED BY ANY ESTABLISHMENT OF NORTH KOREAN TRADE OFFICES IN GERMANY, FOR ITS REACTION TO PROPOSAL.

4. IN EXPLAINING USG VIEWS, EDMOND EMPHASIZED THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF TRADE OFFICES

WOULD ONLY ENCOURAGE NORTH KOREAN INTRANSIGENCE IN ITS EFFORTS TO ISOLATE ROK INTERNATIONALLY AND WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO INTEREST SHARED BY US AND FRG IN SEEING SOCIALIST STATES IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH SEOUL. FURTHERMORE, ONCE NORTH KOREANS ESTABLISH TRADE OFFICE, THEY CAN BE EXPECTED TO PRESS FOR INCREMENTAL INCREASES IN STATUS AND FUNCTIONS, AS THEIR TRADE OFFICE IN PARIS IS NOW DOING. EDMOND ALSO QUESTIONED WHETHER THERE IS SUFFICIENT ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATION FOR TRADE OFFICES IN VIEW OF SERIOUS NORTH KOREAN DELAY IN

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MEETING PAYMENT SCHEDULES TO WESTERN CREDITORS. INGERSOLL UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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